

Holiday Decoration Guidelines for the Interior Complex

We encourage employees and organizations to celebrate the spirit of the holiday season by decorating their offices; however, we want to make sure that you and your office environment remain safe. Please take a moment to read the following guidelines for the arrangements of displays and decorations in federally-occupied buildings that have been set forth by the General Services Administration (GSA) and NBC's Division of Facilities Management Services (DFMS). We need your cooperation and commitment to safety this holiday season!

Guidelines:

Decorations and displays must not use lighted candles, open flames, or high heat-generating devices.

Except as noted below, all decorations and displays in offices, corridors, lobbies, or other public spaces including the cafeteria, auditoriums, or other places of assembly shall be constructed of noncombustible or flame-retardant materials and kept clear of any fire alarm, fire strobe, lighting, public address, exit signs and exit or access to an exit.

Holiday lights and extension cords must bear the mark of an independent testing laboratory (e.g., UL, FM, CSA). Lights should be checked for broken or loose sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. If they are damaged, they must not be used. Extension cords must be properly sized, must not be run through doorways or transoms, must not be plugged into another extension cord, and must not pose a tripping hazard.

The installation or attachment of decorations and holiday lights to ceilings in corridors or offices in the Main Interior Building (MIB) is prohibited. Attaching or affixing materials to the ceiling--even with the use of tape--may cause disturbance of asbestos-containing materials.

The attachment of electric lights or devices to a light fixture, public address or a sprinkler system is a violation of the National Electrical Code and is prohibited.

Holiday lights must be turned off each evening.

Artificial trees are permitted in any size as long as they do not interfere with any exit or access to an exit. Artificial trees must be labeled as flame retardant.

Electric lights are prohibited on metal artificial trees.

Live trees that are delivered to the Main Interior Building should be delivered to the building via the basement level (B-ramp) and must be taken to upper floors via the freight elevator. Please do not use the passenger elevators or lobby entrances to get live trees to your work area.

DFMS may permit the use of a live tree provided the following conditions are met:

1. The tree stands in water and in a secure stand.
2. The tree is clear of exit routes.
3. There are no other combustibles in the area likely to be ignited by fire in the tree.
4. The maximum height of the tree does not exceed two-thirds of the ceiling height.

All exceptions to the above must be submitted in writing for approval prior to installation. Submissions should be addressed to the Building Manager, DFMS, at mail stop 1210. If you have any questions, please contact the Building Manager's office at (202) 208-7560.

You may contact the Building Manager's office between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. during the first full week in January to have live trees picked up by our custodial contractor. DFMS will make arrangements with its trash-hauling contractor to have the trees processed for compost.

Additional guidance for the purchase of holiday decorations and cards, acceptance of gifts, soliciting contributions, and business-related parties and events can be obtained from your servicing ethics counselor or by contacting the Department's Ethics Office at (202) 208-5916. A copy of the Departmental guidance can be viewed and printed from <http://www.doi.gov/ethics/holiday01.pdf>.

Use of Alcohol on Federal Property: As provided by the Office of the Solicitor memorandum dated November 30, 1998, there is a general prohibition against use alcoholic beverages in U.S. Government buildings; however, the GSA delegated to the head of the agency (the Secretary) the authority to waive the prohibition. This authority for the Main and South Interior Buildings is exercised by the National Business Center, DFMS. Before serving alcoholic beverages in either of these buildings, you must complete a request form (a copy can be printed from http://www.nbc.gov/Alcohol_Wavier.pdf, which must be approved by the Chief, DFMS. This form can also be obtained from the Special Events Office, room 1343 or DFMS, room 1210, MIB. The request form asks for information to demonstrate that proper safety precautions and controls will be exercised. Completed forms should be sent to the Chief, DFMS, mail stop 1210, MIB. If you have questions or need additional information, please call the Special Events Office on (202) 208-4412 or DFMS on (202) 208-7182.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring everyone has a safe and happy holiday season!